

SECRET

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IN 132/13

~~To: R/2 - Parents~~

~~FROM: FD JACK D. LEE~~

Subject: Security Intelligence in the American Republics

Background:

Since June 24, 1940 the Federal Bureau of Investigation has been operating the offices of the Legal and Civil Attaches in all of our Embassies and in various Consulates in the American Republics.

Recently FBI informed the Department of State of its plans to close the offices in Panama and Haiti. However, because of vigorous protest by the Embassies and the office of American Republics, Assistant Secretary Braden approached Mr. J. Edgar Hoover and was able to have the two offices remain open for an additional period.

In the discussions regarding Panama and Haiti, it was learned that the major reason for FBI being reluctant to continue the offices in those posts was because of the recent decision which provides that world-wide intelligence coverage is to be the responsibility of the Central Intelligence Group (CIG). Apparently, FBI took the position that since it would be relinquishing Western Hemisphere coverage to CIG at a later date, it should take advantage of any immediate opportunity to reduce FBI foreign coverage.

Problems

Since there is a possibility of a change in the responsibility of the coverage in the American Republics, the Department must consider the various aspects, repercussions, etc. which might result from such a change.

Many of the Republics are holding national elections. All are attempting to readjust their internal affairs to post-war conditions, and all are experiencing influence in some form or other from minority groups. An interruption of the present operations in our Embassies at this particular time would be most unfortunate.

It is to the advantage of the United States to see that our Embassies are not deprived of the coverage and services which have been carefully built up during the past six years. The continued

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utilization of the present organization would be most advantageous but if that is not feasible then an orderly transition based on definite plans which would cause little or no interruption of service to the interested agencies would be desirable.

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The Department must consider the relationship which has been built up between the Civil and Legal Attaches' offices and the police and intelligence organizations in the Americas. These relations should be maintained and widened since they are to our advantage.

The present system of communication should be preserved. There are receiving and sending radios which have been authorized in thirteen of the countries. Permission for some of these were obtained only after much negotiation. These should be saved for to attempt to renegotiate after their removal would be useless in many instances.

The estimated 3000 active confidential informants and sources of information should not be lost.

Too, the question of files, equipment, space, coverage, etc. must be taken into consideration.

Recommendation:

It is suggested that General Vandenberg be approached relative to any plans which CIG has as regards assuming immediate coverage in the American Republics.

If there is no possibility of continuing the present FBI coverage which, from the Department's standpoint and that of the various missions, would be most advantageous, then we should request General Vandenberg to arrange for us to meet with his CIG representatives and representatives from the FBI in order to discuss the over-all problem and to formulate a plan for the orderly transition in any change which might occur.

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